BEST FOR CLASSIFIED ADS

CBW
Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly • 18 May 1996 • Issue 218

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Vehicle inspectors' Haverhill swoop

BELT LOOPHOLE
Will registration avoid new regs?

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SJ CARLTON

SECOND TO NONE

SJ SUPERDEAL

Scania Elite K113 Plaxton Paramount 3500
***1992**, 7 speed manual GR801 comfort shift gearbox, ABS, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhaust brake, kneel facility, ferry lift, autolube, electric retarder, Webasto heating, inswinging entrance door. Central continental door, centre toilet, half rear emergency door, 3 roof vents, forced air ventilation, aircraft lockers, crew compartment, grey moquette, 49 reclining seats, centre gangway carpet, double glazed, side curtains, rear curtains, side blinds, aluminium wheels, Blaupunkt radio / PA system.*
MOT 13.09.96

SJ SUPERDEAL

SOLD

Volvo B10M M[illegible] Alizee
***1990**, ZF 6 sp[illegible] S6[illegible] manual gearbox, Telma Retarder, autolube, fer[illegible]t, roa[illegible]eed governor, variable top speed limiter, exhau[illegible] Webasto heating, plug front entrance do[illegible] continental door, half rear emergency door, centre t[illegible] crew compartment, 3 roof vents, forced air ven[illegible] hringhausen drivers seat, courier seat, 49 reclin[illegible] seats, brown moquette, double glazed, side blinds, rear curtains, radiomobile radio / PA system.*
MOT 01.10.96

SJ SUPERDEAL

Scania K112 Plaxton 4000
***1985**, 72 reclining seats, courier seat, toilet, drinks.*
MOT 28.01.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

SOLD

Leyland Tiger P[illegible] 3500
***1984**, 6 speed ZF [illegible]x, 49 reclining seats, O/S/R sunken toilet, O/S/R [illegible]ntal door, drinks, fridge, radio, PA*
M.O.T. 06.96

SJ SUPERDEAL

Volvo B10M Mk II Van Hool Alizee
***1989**, 273 BHP, ZF 6 speed S690 manual gearbox, Telma retarder, exhaust brake, autolube, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, ferry lift, plug entrance door, half rear emergency exit, double glazed side windows with blinds, rear screen curtains, Ishringhausen drivers seat, courier seat, 53 reclining seats, brown moquette, radiomobile radio / PA system, 3 roof air vents, forced air ventilation. Choice of 6 blue moquette.*
Variable MoTs

SJ SUPERDEAL

Volvo B10M Mk III Van Hool Alizee
***1991**, 273 BHP, ZF HP5000 automatic gearbox, internal retarder, ABS, road speed governor, variable top speed limiter, autolube, ferry lift, kneel facility, plug entrance door, centre continental door, half rear emergency exit, double glazed side windows with blinds, rear screen curtains, Ishringhausen drivers seat, courier seat, crew compartment, 49 reclining seats, **lap belts**, brown/orange moquette, mid section servery / fridge, toilet, radiomobile radio / PA system, 2 roof air vents, forced air ventilation. Choice of 2 brown / orange.*
Variable MOTs

SJ SUPERDEAL

DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee
***1989**, 49 seats, Webasto, drivers bunk, double glazing, foot rests, seat back nets, water boiler, fridge, curtains, carpets, wired for TV and video, sunken centre toilet, continental door.*
MOT 09.12.96

SJ SUPERDEAL

Setra Tornado 215 HD
***1992**, MAN engine, ZF 7 speed gearbox, Voith retarder, 49 reclining seats & courier seat, sunken centre toilet with continental door, Webasto heating, Surtrak air conditioning, servery unit with water boiler, front mounted fridge, radio / PA / cassette system, 2 TV monitors and video, drivers bunk, drivers door with wardrobe and central locking.*
MOT 06.12.96

SJ SUPERDEAL

Leyland Tiger 260 Duple 340
***1987**, 48 reclining seats, O/S/R/ sunken toilet, O/S/R continental door, TV / video, courier seat, blue stripe moquette, exterior 2 tone metallic grey.*
M.O.T. 22.03.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

Volvo B10M Jonckheere P90
***1983**, 58 reclining seats plus courier, TV / video.*
M.O.T. 22.03.97

SJ SUPERDEAL

Leyland Tiger L10
***1989**, Alexander service bus bodies, Cummins L10 ZF automatic, 55 seats & 24 standees, painted white.*
MOT 30.08.96

SJ UPDATE

New Neoplan Deals
from immediate stock or new build

Neoplan Skyliner
V8 Twin Turbo Mercedes 381 BHP
77 seats and crew - air conditioning

Neoplan Cityliner
V8 Twin Turbo Mercedes 381 BHP
49/50 seats and crew - air conditioning

Neoplan Jetliner
Mercedes V6 290 BHP
35 seats and crew - air conditioning

Neoplan Transliner
Cummins GX 290 or GX 300 Euro II
49/51 seats and crew - air conditioning option

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Tel 01733 467000 Fax 01733 467154

Editor
Mike Morgan 01733 467139
News editor
Mark Williams 01733 467140
Production editor
Frank Forster 01733 467142
Tourism editor
William Golden 01733 467141
Northern news editor
Andrew Jarosz 0113 2566505
Designer
Tina Golden 01733 467143

Group sales manager
Hugh Cairns 01733 467151
Assistant advertisement manager
Mike Moore 01733 467145
Advertisement team leader
Julia Hinkins 01733 467144
Display telesales executive
Lee Puffett 01733 467148
Classified telesales executives
Neil Mason 01733 467147
Michelle Wood 01733 467146

PA to publishing director
Lisa Wilson 01733 467157

Group production manager
Nicky Curd 01733 467121
Production assistants
Debi McGowan 01733 467123
Suzanne Porter 01733 467124

Publishing director
Mark Barton 01733 467136
Managing director
Ian Griffin 01733 467007

Classified Advertising 01733 467144

Subscriptions Jazz Walshe, *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough tel 01733 467048, fax 01733 467002
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School reports

SPOT checks on coaches and buses used for home to school transport are now fairly common fare. Operators involved in this sort of work are fully aware that the Police, Department of Transport and local authorities are keen to join forces and mount inspections at the school gate.

These exercises are usually carried out with full publicity involving TV cameras and local newspapers. The authorities inevitably find defects and issue a number of immediate and delayed prohibitions.

The resulting media coverage is predictable. Just mix-and-match the words 'school bus' with 'defects' and you have a safety scare guaranteed to send ripples through the local community.

Consequently the operators concerned get black marks and are sent home from school with a report which makes depressing reading. Their once glowing CV has been marred and their reputations tarnished.

CBW and every reputable operator must wholeheartedly support the Department of Transport in its efforts to ensure all operators are running safe vehicles. Proper checks must be part of the routine and preferably carried out in a way which is least disruptive to the travelling public.

If passengers are unreasonably inconvenienced the industry has a grievance. If the targeting of operators is unfair and unreasonable there are further grounds for complaint. If great play is made of minor defects there is suspicion that someone is conspiring to give the industry at large a bad name.

However, it never ceases to amaze that some operators continue to get caught out.

Why send a PSV out on any job, never mind the transport of school children, with known defects?

And by known defects we include damaged tyres, loose wheels, oil leaks and dangerous bodywork.

Whereas some defects can be classed as 'unlucky' - the sort that were not there when the coach or bus left the yard, others are put down to neglect.

Knowing that far-reaching publicity follows every spot check, the responsibilities placed on every operator's shoulders stretch way beyond his or her own business.

Seatbelts will revolutionise the funding and type of vehicle used on school transport but, before then, there's another force at work to lift the age profile and improve perceptions of the state of the PSV fleet.

Despite widespread - and deserved - condemnation of the infamous target-setting VI business plan, their resolve remains intact.

However, let they be warned that, just as the 'authorities' will not tolerate sloppy maintenance, so the PSV industry will not ignore unfair or unreasonable treatment.

We expect the enforcers to be informed and sensible. Instances of where they get it wrong should get the same high-profile publicity as that given to the wayward school bus operator.

Mike Morgan
Editor

events

21-23 May: Association of Local Bus Company Managers (ALBUM) 1996 Conference, Cavendish Hotel, Eastbourne. Trade stands available. Details from David Howard, secretary, Eastbourne Buses, Birch Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN23 6PD, tel 01323 721903, fax 01323 643034

23 May: CPT London & Home Counties Region annual Leeds Castle dinner. Details from Jim Carley, regional officer, London & Home Counties, on 0171 831 7546

31 May to 2 June: Avro Ex 96: 'Event of the Year for the vehicle recovery and breakdown industry'. Details on 01553 828686, fax 01553 828020

2 June: Bus and Coach Wales Rally, Barry Island, South Glamorgan. Contact Cardiff Transport Preservation Group, 1 Tyn-y-Cae Grove, Cardiff CF4 6DB, tel 0374 158761

2 June: Leyland 100, Lancashire. Historic bus and truck rally. Exhibitor inquiries ONLY, contact Gordon Baron, c/o The British Commercial Vehicle Museum, King Street, Leyland, Preston PR5 1LE, tel: 01257 266036

3-6 June: ISATA European automotive development forum, Florence, Italy. Registration forms from ISATA, 42 Lloyd Park Avenue, Croydon CR0 5SB, tel 0181 681 30690, fax 0181 686 1490

5-6 June: Natural Gas Vehicle Association Bi-Ennial Conference & Exhibition, Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon. Details on 0171 388 7598, fax 0171 355 5099

7-9 June: Engine Remanufacturing Exhibition, International Exhibition Centre, Castle Donington Race Circuit, Derbyshire. Details, tel or fax 01424 883110/882702

18-19 June: EUR NAV 96 — Vehicle Navigation Location and Control conference, The Church House Conference Centre, Dean's Yard, Westminster, London SW1P 3NZ. Details, The Director, The Royal Institute of Navigation, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AT, tel 0171 589 5021, fax 0171 823 8671

▼ Coach

Grey-Green moves out of north Kent

Commuter ops sold to Pullman

by Mike Morgan

COWIE has sold its Grey-Green coach operation in north east Kent to London Coaches parent company the Pullman Group, which is using the acquisition to consolidate its North Kent Express commuter service.

Included in the deal is Grey-Green's Stroud depot, 21 vehicles and 40 staff.

Pullman managing director Pat Waterman said the commuter service from the Medway towns had been integrated with existing North Kent services, boosting the daily coach requirement to 47 vehicles.

Additional private hire work will take the total North Kent fleet to 71 in the Summer.

Longer-term plans will turn the Stroud base into the group's coach engineering centre with former Grey-Green operations transferring to North Kent's depot nine miles down the road. Expansion results in Pullman increasing its planned 1996 new vehicle intake from 15 to around 25 coaches.

The number of new Van Hool/DAFs will probably double to seven or eight, whereas the recently-launched Ikarus-bodied DAF Bus SB3000WS form the rest of the order placed with Hughes DAF. All the Ikarus will have air-conditioning and automatic gearboxes.

Pullman is reviewing the future of a string of commercial and Kent County Council contracted bus routes run by seven Ley-

Stroud depot and its servi

▼ Coach and Bus

£96m bid wins SBH

FIRSTBUS will lay claim to the title of Britain's largest bus operator when it acquires SB Holdings (SBH) under an agreed £96 million bid.

Three SBH directors - executive chairman Peter Shaw, and joint managing directors Gerald Kelly and John Hodson - will each receive £4.8 million before tax for their initial investments of around £40,000 made during privatisation three years ago. All will leave the proposed new set-up.

Holder of a 21.7 per cent stake in SBH, Stagecoach is making a book profit of around £15 million in selling its shares for just under £24 million.

Meanwhile, the SBH workforce will make an average of over £20,000 per person and well over £30,000 in some cases.

The extended FirstBus empire will incorporate more than 20,000 employees and 8,000 buses, and will command an annual turnover of £530 million. Market share will rise to around 21 per cent, which, says FirstBus, will place it up to four percentage points ahead of Stagecoach.

SBW - incorporating Strathclyde Buses, Kelvin Central and GCT - employs 3,500 and runs 1,250 buses in the greater Glasgow conurbation where it enjoys around two-thirds of total market share. At present, FirstBus has only a one per cent market share in Glasgow.

FirstBus deputy chairman and chief executive Moir Lockhead describes Glasgow as "an important new urban bus market."

Customers are promised improved fleet and increased frequencies.

▼ Coach and Bus

LPG backed

SHELL has put its weight behind Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) as the alternative fuel to diesel.

As the coach and bus industry remains divided between LPG and Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) in the drive for low emissions, Shell Gas md Pascal Rambaud told an LPG conference attended by representatives from local government, bus companies and fleet operators there are currently around four million LPG-powered vehicles worldwide. He said: "It is a trend which looks set to continue."

▼ Bus

No inquiry

IAN Lang, president of the Board of Trade and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, has decided, on the information at present before him, not to refer the acquisition by Stagecoach Holdings plc of a 50 per cent interest in Burnley & Pendle Transport Co Ltd to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

ces are consolidated into Pullman's North Kent Express Medway operations

land Lynx buses acquired as part of the deal. Mr Waterman confirmed bus operations were not regarded as a core activity. Meanwhile, Grey-Green retains a 22-strong coach unit providing Essex commuter services and private hire from its Barking depot and Pullman is known to be seeking further coach acquisitions.

▼ Coach

Irizar's record year

SPANISH bodybuilder Irizar, whose Century coach on Scania K113 underframe sells in the UK through Scania Bus & Coach, boosted total sales by 38 per cent last year. Three-quarters of its output was for its home market, resulting in one in three coaches in Spain being bodied by Irizar.

Increase in sales over the last three years has been 240 per cent and exports have multiplied by six. In the last two years this growth has created 300 new jobs. Output has increased still further this year from three coaches a day to 3.5.

Irizar expects to add Ireland and Norway to the growing list of export markets in 1996

▼ Coach and Bus

CPT aids annoyed ops

ALTHOUGH CPT continues its call for stricter enforcement of parking regulations, particularly in bus lanes, it has come to the aid of operators aggrieved by the issue of what they consider to be incorrectly issued tickets. CPT's coaching consultant, Bob Pilbeam, has produced a pro-forma for members to use when considering an appeal.

▼ Bus

Asquith to market Asian vehicles

BRITAIN'S coach and bus manufacturers face a new challenge from one of south east Asia's leading bus bodybuilders, which is to sell vehicles through Asquith, the Essex company best known for its range of vintage-style small buses, taxis and commercial vehicles.

Asquith, headed by md Crispin Reed, is raising capital through a share flotation to support its plans to market the Sri Lankan-built city buses.

The flotation will be for 38.5 per cent of the company and it is anticipated to raise £750,000 before expenses, giving Asquith a present market value of £1.95 million.

Although the Great Yeldham-based company plans a new design of wheelchair accessible 'black cab', an integral part of its expansion plans is the UK sales agency for the Sri Lankan coachbuilder, Dimo, and it has appointed former R&I md Ian Haddon as its bus operations director.

Dimo, which will also build the 'black cab', is a fast-growing company offering design and build services to the bus industry with special skills in city buses which can be based on any established chassis.

Mr Reed said: "Dimo offers an excellent, quality product with fine technical skills but at significantly lower cost than its European-based rivals. The company makes full use of recognised parts and components and will build to the customer's specification."

First Dimo bus for the UK will be on MAN 11.220 midi-chassis anticipated in the Autumn. A low-floor bus is expected to follow.

Dimo International is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Dimo Auto Industries, a Sri Lankan company established in 1990. The plant was set up to by technical director, Kurt Clauss, who had many years experience with Mercedes-Benz in Germany. More than 1,000 buses have been built and a 168,000 sq ft factory expansion is due for completion at the end of the year. Its 25,000 sq ft prototype development centre opened in October last year.

Asquith has chosen to raise new capital on the OFEX market, a trading facility for unquoted companies. CBW

Flotation funds expansion away from vintage-style

●●● INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK ●●● INSIDE TRANSIT THIS WEEK ●●●

News:
Proposed sale of SB Holdings represents the highest price paid since the purchase of West Midlands Travel by the National Express Group. OFT attitude crucial to FirstBus takeover. MMC did not object to SBH acquisition of Kelvin Central.

London General has retained a major network of routes in a London Buses retendering exercise. The Sutton route network in South London has a PVR of 95 vehicles.

Trolley-buses set for a Bradford comeback. FirstBus developments interested in EC-funded project.

News Extra:
Undoubtedly the most unusual of the 25 British Rail operating companies, Island Line, on the Isle of Wight, offers franchises limited opportunities for making a vast fortune but Noel Millier finds it has the advantage of being a small, easily manageable business with a strong seasonal element.

Analysis:
Bermuda-based Sea Containers Ltd is set to double its turnover in the next few months, following its takeover of the seven-year franchise of the Intercity East Coast Line. Andrew Jarosz reports that the group draws its core strength from manufacturing and leasing containers and has shown impressive growth in turnover and profit over the last full financial year.

● *Fill in the subscription form NOW!* *Page 51*

In brief

Show selling well

EXPOCOACH 96, the biannual show which moves from Telford to Hall 3 at the NEC this year, reports "only a few seats left" for the event on 1-3 October 1996. Neil Millington, ExpoManagement chairman, said: "The response from the trade has been very encouraging." For details contact show manager, Mark Griffin, on 01926 888123 or fax 01926 888004.

DVLA drops price

THE Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency has reduced the price of its N prefix range of select registrations by as much as 50 per cent, aligning them with its custom marks range of older prefix letters. There are still over 200,000 potential numbers available. Ring the DVLA hotline on 0181 200 6565.

£9m investment

LONDON General is to invest £9 million over two years because of success in the latest round of London Transport Buses tendering. Renewed five-year contracts for 10 routes in the Sutton area require 53 new low-floor single deckers and 42 new double-deck buses. In addition London General is awarded route S1 from LondonLinks.

Scania profits fall

SCANIA, the Swedish manufacturer floated last month, has blamed adverse currency effects and increased costs linked to its new 4-series range of trucks for a 21 per cent fall in first-quarter profits. Operating margins fell from 17.8 per cent to 14.1 per cent despite increased sales of coaches, buses and trucks from 10,840 and 11,691. UK and Brazil are its biggest markets.

CTA extension

CTA'S annual exhibition of accessible minibuses and equipment is extended to three days this year due to requests from exhibitors and a surge of interest from the public. The exhibition, at the Norbreck Castle Hotel, Blackpool, from 14-16 November, runs alongside the CTA's annual conference and training event.

▼ Coach and Bus

Recovery is confirmed

Two per cent rise in April

By Mike Morgan

ONE third of the way into the year and a clearer picture of 1996 coach and bus registrations is starting to emerge.

April figures supplied by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders confirm the hint of recovery detected in March (*CBW*, 20 April). Total registrations of full-size PSVs are up by two per cent in April, cutting the decline on the year to date from 15 per cent on the first two months of the year to 8.5 per cent.

This rosier picture is due almost entirely to April's revival in the bus sector, which was given a 13.4 per cent boost, whereas the coach market struggles to rekindle the unexpected high levels of demand in 1995.

April is traditionally a popular time for coach deliveries and 1996 was no exception, with 36.7 per cent of the total for the year so far delivered during that one month alone. Although, as a proportion, this performance mirrors 1995, the actual number of new coaches put on the road was down seven per cent while the year-to-date fall is 7.6 per cent.

Coach market leader Volvo has strengthened its dominant position, taking market share from 57.1 per cent in 1995 to 62 per cent this year. Despite a stronger performance in April the Dennis share has slipped to 10.9 per cent and Scania registered 11 fewer coaches in April, giving it 8.4 per cent, down from 9.4 per cent. After a slow start to the year DAF Bus matched April 1995, bringing its share closer to five per cent.

April was altogether a better month for Dennis in the bus sector, where it registered 34 more vehicles than arch rival Volvo. Though it is still 86 behind its 1995 total to date, the Guildford-based manufacturer has regained top position in the league table as it is poised to deliver significant numbers of its low-floor Dart, restoring its command of the midibus sector.

Despite 14 fewer buses recorded in April 1996, Volvo's share of the bus market is still higher than 1995.

In advance of first Excel deliveries Optare's hold on third place in this sector gets stronger because its MetroRider is riding on the crest of a wave. Also riding higher in 1996 is Scania, which had a boost last month thanks mainly to the Swedish company's British Bus order and the growing success of the L113 Axcess-ultralow.

For those curious about the 'others' in the tables, registrations to date are: Iveco, four, after it delivered another EuroRider to Coliseum; MAN, 22; and Mercedes-Benz, 17. Other imports account for 62 registrations. CBW

COACH AND BUS REGISTRATIONS

	April 1996 units	1995 units	Year to Date 1996 units	%	1995 units	%
Volvo	186	202	650	47.8	668	45.0
Dennis	128	104	334	24.6	438	29.5
Scania	48	41	123	9.1	116	7.8
Optare	22	20	74	5.4	56	3.8
DAF Bus	18	20	56	4.1	78	5.2
Bova	14	14	17	1.3	25	1.7
Others	47	53	105	7.7	104	7.0
Total	463	454	1359	100	1485	100

COACH REGISTRATIONS

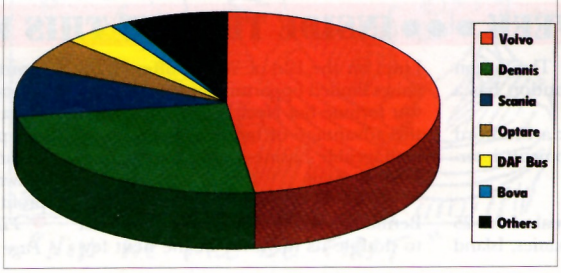
	April 1996 units	1995 units	Year to Date 1996 units	%	1995 units	%
Volvo	123	125	397	62.0	396	57.1
Dennis	31	24	70	10.9	88	12.7
Scania	18	29	54	8.4	65	9.4
DAF Bus	15	15	31	4.8	39	5.6
Bova	14	14	17	2.7	25	3.6
Others	34	46	71	11.2	80	11.6
Total	235	253	640	100	693	100

BUS REGISTRATIONS

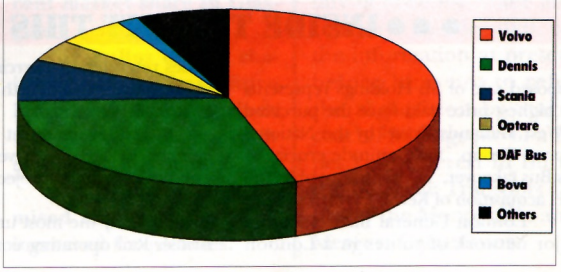
	April 1996 units	1995 units	Year to Date 1996 units	%	1995 units	%
Dennis	97	80	264	36.7	350	44.2
Volvo	63	77	253	35.2	272	34.3
Optare	22	20	74	10.3	56	7.1
Scania	30	12	69	9.6	51	6.4
DAF Bus	3	5	25	3.5	39	4.9
Others	13	7	34	4.7	24	3.1
Total	228	201	719	100	792	100

The above table details all vehicles on designated PSV underframes registered last month in Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man and Channel Islands. Source: SMMT

Coach & Bus Registrations 1996



Coach & Bus Registrations 1995



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▼ Bus

GMBN boosts its branding

GREATER Manchester Buses North is strengthening its orange branding and changing its identity to Greater Manchester endorsed with FirstBus corporate logo. Blue lines will be applied to the GM orange and the company has accelerated its investment in new buses.

FirstBus plans to spend £5 million over the next few months — a mix of Plaxton or Northern Counties-bodied Dennis Darts and Plaxton/Mercedes-Benz 709Ds. Half that total will be allocated to Bury depot, which is to have a mass clearout of ageing deckers.

New double deckers are expected for Manchester's Queens Road depot. Md Dr Alan Westwell said: "This is an ideal opportunity to simplify and strengthen the branding which our customers easily recognise and identify with."

▼ Coach and Bus

Rear steer

ZF has extended its compact Servocom power steering system to include rear axle steering for increased vehicle manoeuvrability.

Rear wheel steering with a lock angle of 20 degrees becomes operational only when the front steering axle exceeds five degrees. An operating cylinder senses steering movement, transferring it hydrostatically to the rear axle steering ram.

▼ Coach

No connection

CBW wishes to make it clear that Johnson Bros of Worksop is in no way connected with the story about wheel loss on page 13 of last week's magazine (*CBW*, 11 May). We apologise for any misunderstanding which may have occurred.

▼ Coach

Stolen coach wrecked after hitting building

Vehicle valued at around £20,000 looks like being a write-off

By Frank Forster

A COACH taken from a depot in the middle of the night in Essex was completely wrecked after hitting the wall of an adjacent building.

The coach was a 1985 Dennis Dorchester/Plaxton 3500 owned by Bordacoach, a four-vehicle operation run by father and son Geoff and Dave Stubbington, based at Benfleet, Essex.

General manager Geoff Stubbington, 62, said the incident happened around 3.30am as he had received information from a passer-by.

Persons unknown forced a padlock on the gate of the operation's rented depot at Shotgate Business Park, Wickford, Essex, broke into the coach, and then either drove it or released the handbrake and let it roll out of the gate, across the road, down the sloping forecourt of the adjacent County Windows premises, and into the wall of a building.

"The damage to the building didn't look too bad from outside because it was covered with steel cladding but inside the building brickwork has been pushed inward and filing cabinets moved," Mr Stubbington said.

"The coach, valued at around £20,000, looks like being a complete write-off. I only bought it last Christmas."

He said that, until the incident, the vehicle was being used on a Cheshunt to Southend-on-Sea bus service, which had to be cancelled until he managed to hire another vehicle because he was already using hired vehicles for other jobs.

Meanwhile, Alan Smiles of Kirkby was trying to locate another similarly-priced vehicle for him.

Mr Stubbington said he had not experienced much vandalism in the past although fuel tanks on a vehicle had once been tampered with. He had heard that buses from other operators in the area had been taken in the past.

Beyond repair: the remains of the Dorchester

Back in business: United's refurbished Nationals give extra capacity

▼ Bus

Refurbished Nationals replace midis

LONDON United' route H37 has outgrown its midibus allocation and the high-frequency service between Hounslow and Richmond is being run with 13 refurbished Leyland Nationals.

Finished in London United's post-privatisation livery, the company hopes the 62-passenger Nationals will ensure that "Sorry, full up" should be replaced by a welcoming "More room inside".

▼ Coach

Driver probe

A COACH driver has been suspended by his company pending an investigation after he took a school bus the wrong way round a roundabout, it is claimed.

The Vale of Llangollen Coaches driver was taking pupils from Llangollen to their homes in nearby Chirk when he found the A5 temporarily blocked at the Whitehurst roundabout.

A spokesman for Wrexham Council, responsible for the school bus service, said: "The police were informed and we have told the company this is obviously unacceptable." CBW

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▼ Coach

New era of innovation at Plaxton

A taste of things to come

By Mike Morgan

ALTHOUGH 1996 coach and bus registrations may not be hitting the dizzy heights of last year, a sample of vehicles emerging from Plaxton's Eastfield plant suggests a new era of innovation.

New design for seat covers

On a recent visit to the plant, *CBW* publishing director, Mark Barton, was treated to a taste of things to come. Lined up outside the factory was part of Wallace Arnold's 51-coach £7 million 1996 order (*CBW*, 13 April).

Outwardly they resemble dozens of similar Premiere 350 coaches in WA's familiar cream livery, the only distinguishing mark from previous deliveries being the N-reg plates.

However, inside it's time for something completely different.

Inspired by Plaxton's revised interior with greater use of moquette, WA has commissioned a new design for the material covering seats and the underside of the luggage racks.

Creating a regal atmosphere, the bold fleur-de-lys motif is picked out in orange on deep red background.

Meanwhile, inside the factory the first of 10 articulated coaches for Stagecoach is nearing completion.

Based on Volvo B10M, these are Plaxton's first artics. Front section is standard two-axle B10M/Premiere 320 'sawn-off' behind the rear-mounted fuel tanks. Where you would normally expect to find the boot Volvo has fitted the artic turntable which connects to the single-axle trailer.

Overall length is 18 metres and Stagecoach is expected to use the 71-seat coaches on interurban express services operated by Fife Scottish.

Although small by comparison, the 10.6-metre low-floor Pointer-bodied buses leaving the factory are no less significant as they herald new levels of accessibility for services around the country.

In common with many low-floor buses, those on Dennis Dart SLF chassis for Brighton Buses have been used to launch imaginative and attractive liveries to market the revised services.

In Brighton's case it is route 49 and its customers targeted are identified by a fine slogan on the cantrail: "kiddies in buggies, shoppers with trolleys, commuters in a hurry...the bus for everyone."

Latest WA coaches look same outside, but inside it's another story

First of 10 artics for Stagecoach is nearing completion

Brighton's Dart SLF Pointers sport imaginative liveries

▼ Euro 96 File

Operators still in the dark over Euro 96 arrangements

CANTONA'S winning goal at last week's Cup Final may have given Euro 96 fans a taste of the European soccer skills that will be on display.

But meanwhile, with the competition due to kick off on 8 June at Wembley, coach operators taking fans to any of the 31 games programmed over the next three weeks remain in the dark about arrangements for coaches at the eight venues.

However, at least two of the regional police forces involved have contact lines.

Information about coach movements at Old Trafford can be obtained from inspector Peter Faulkener of Greater Manchester Police on 0161 856 7771 and chief inspector Willson of Merseyside Police can be contacted on 0151 777 5781 in connection with those games at Anfield.

CPT has a national co-ordinator experienced in police matters, former Metropolitan Police coach liaison officer Bob Pilbeam, who can be contacted on 0171 831 7546.

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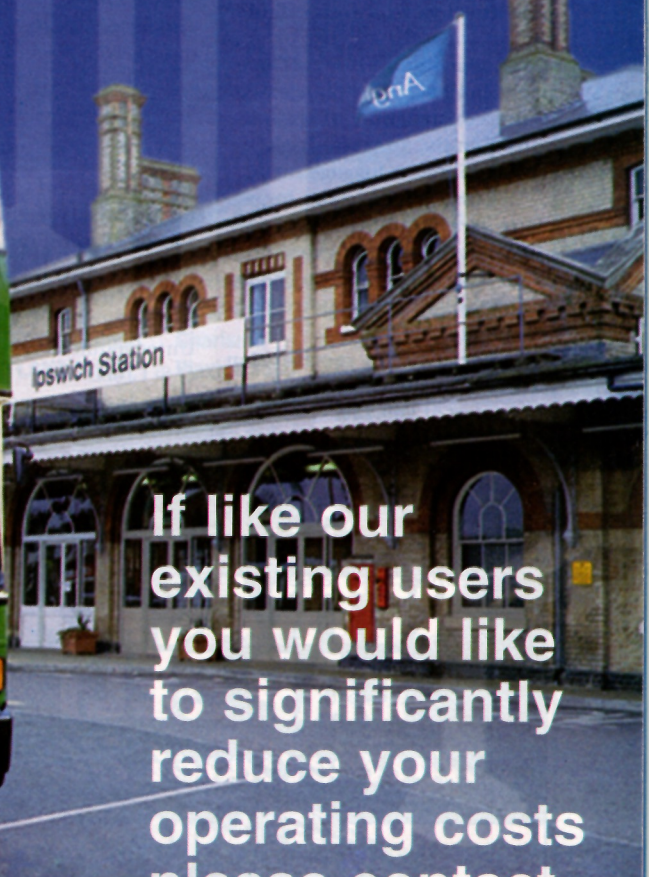

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▼ Coach and Bus

Buscraft switch to Merc LK900

BUSCRAFT, the Birkenhead-based company which introduced the Impala range of midi-coaches on Mercedes-Benz 814L chassis just over a year ago, is among the first to switch to the new Mercedes-Benz LK900 chassis.

This seven-tonne chassis, one of the new-generation Mercs, incorporates the recently announced Euro 2 four-cylinder engine with either five or six-speed gearbox. Buscraft uses glass fibre as a principal element in the construction of exterior body panels, luggage lockers, roof and interior luggage racks.

Core vehicle in the Impala range is a 9.5-metre 35-seater with what the company describes as a "very large boot". An optional eight cubic metre boot is available.

Variations in specification include 24-seater 'executive' and prices start at £69,750.

▼ Coach

Swiss hat trick for Setra

Manufacturer scoops three awards at international show

By Mike Morgan

SETRA, which has just completed its ISO 9001 quality standard accreditation, came up trumps at the second Swiss international coach and bus show when its three entries drove away with three awards.

Top prize in the design and comfort category went to the Setra double-deck S 328 DT 'Bistrobus' of Stewa Reisen, Aschaffenburg. Second place in the class went to another 300-series Setra — a S309HD owned by Swiss operator Unternehmens Novabus of St Croix.

In the category for technical innovation a S315HD of Fas Reisen, Wilhelmshaven, took third prize.

Stewa Reisen's Bistrobus won first prize for design and comfort

A Setra of yesteryear, the trend-setting S6, took top honours in the 'Oldtimer Rally' for veteran coaches. The award was presented by RDA president, Norbert Grein.

Meanwhile, having satisfied the accreditation procedures of the TUV, the German awarding authority, Setra has achieved the coveted international quality standard, ISO 9001 for its manufacture of coaches and buses. CBW

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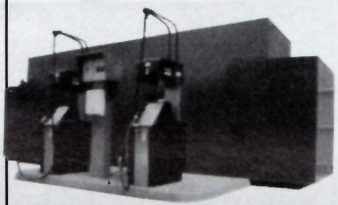

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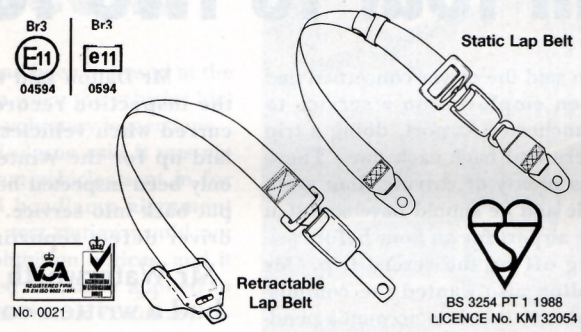

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▼ Maintenance

Coach at school was giv

Eastern traffic commissioner warns operator he is considering revoking licence

by Michael Jewell

A COACH inspected at a school by a DoT examiner was given an immediate prohibition endorsed as showing a significant maintenance failure, a Cambridge disciplinary inquiry heard.

Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd warned Steed's Mini Coaches, of Unit 2, Homefield Road, Haverhill, Suffolk, he was seriously considering revoking its O-licence, and banning partner Maynard Steed from holding a licence.

DoT vehicle examiner Mervyn Lockwood said he had carried out an unannounced maintenance investigation in March. He examined two coaches, imposing an immediate prohibition endorsed as showing a significant maintenance failure plus a defect notice on one and a defect notice on the other. There were a total of nine prohibition items and 17 advisory defects.

The prohibited vehicle had a tyre with the steel cords broken and exposed all the way round, a brake defect, a loose passenger seat and accident damage

The prohibited vehicle had a tyre with the steel cords broken and exposed

to the rear with sharp edges.

Inspection records were not available in a number of cases. One vehicle had no inspection records since May 1995, a second none since June 1995 and a third had none at all. The records available lacked mileages and any record of rectification work.

The system was for the maintenance contractor to hold on to the records until defects were rectified, with the firm repairing the vehicles and then re-presenting them to the contractor. However, the vehicles were not being re-presented.

One vehicle had been given an immediate prohibition in March 1992, said Mr Lockwood. The same vehicle received a further immediate prohibition in September 1992. In June 1995 two vehicles were given immediate prohibitions, one of which was inspected following a complaint from a member of the public.

Another vehicle had been given an immediate prohibition two days prior to the present hearing and a second vehicle was given a defect notice. The inspection sheets prior to the issue of the prohibitions were marked as showing no apparent defects.

At a previous public inquiry in April 1993, the deputy traffic commissioner had renewed the licence for two years conditional upon the maintenance contractors carrying out all the inspections and repairs and vehicles not being allowed on the road until they had been repaired.

Those conditions had not been complied with, said Mr Lockwood. He considered the driver defect reporting system was not working satisfactorily as the drivers had failed to pick up the defects noted on the defect notices.

Transport manager Paul Steed said two prohibitions had been issued to the same vehicle because the clearance between the brake drum and shoe was too great, yet on both occa-

Maynard Steed said they'd had a lot of problems with inspections by contractors

sions the vehicle passed the brake efficiency tests on the rolling road at the test station without any work having been carried out.

DoT vehicle examiner Steven Duff said he had

▼ Maintenance

Authorisation cut from four to two for fo

MAINTENANCE problems have led to Philip Dalton's vehicle authorisation being cut from four vehicles to two for four weeks. In addition, North Eastern traffic commissioner Keith Waterworth has banned Mr Dalton from registering any local services over and above the two services he already had registered at the end of April.

Mr Dalton, trading as City Cabs/City Traveller, of 33 Ferensway, Hull, Humberside, had been called before the commissioner at a Leeds disciplinary inquiry because his poor maintenance standards had led to the issue of a number of prohibition notices.

DoT vehicle examiner Harold Bennison said he had not examined any vehicles during a maintenance investigation as they had all recently been annual tested or tested for the clearance of prohibitions. There were gaps in the inspection records of 11 weeks, 15 weeks and, in one case, six months. There did not appear to be a satisfactory driver defect reporting system.

DoT traffic examiner Alan

Proceedings were pending against one driver who had driven over 4 1/2 hours without a proper break

Dawson said that, following an examination of Mr Dalton's tachograph charts, proceedings were pending in relation to one driver who had exceeded 4 1/2 hours driving without taking the required 45 minutes break on three occasions, driving for some five hours 12 minutes on each occasion.

For Mr Dalton, Gary Hodgson said the driver concerned had been employed on a service to Manchester Airport, doing a trip there and back each day. There was plenty of driving time available and he should have stayed at the airport for an hour before setting off on the return trip. Mr Dalton also wanted the commissioner to take into account a pending prosecution for failing to have a two-year tachograph calibration check.

Mr Waterworth said he had a written complaint from a prospective passenger on the Manchester Airport service that the service had failed to pick him up but Mr Dalton said he had used a sub-contractor on the day in question. Compensation had been paid to the person making the complaint. They carried around 25,000 passengers a year to Manchester Airport and the incidence of complaint was minimal.

Mr Dalton said the gaps in the inspection records had occurred when vehicles had been laid up for the Winter and had only been inspected before being put back into service. He had a driver defect reporting system,

Mr Waterworth said he had a written complaint from a prospective passenger saying he had not been picked up

but he accepted it was not a nil defect reporting system.

Following a previous public inquiry in December 1993, he had started to send his vehicles into the Beverley Test Station for inspection and he then had the repairs carried out by various contractors. All the prohibitions, apart from the last two in Novem-

en prohibition

and banning him from holding one at all

visited a school in February following a complaint from a member of the public. One of Steed's coaches was at the school and on examination it was given an immediate prohibition endorsed as showing a significant maintenance failure.

He and another examiner then visited the firm's premises to carry out a fleet check. Five vehicles were at the operating centre. One vehicle was in the workshop under repair. The other vehicles were examined. One was given an immediate prohibition plus a defect notice, a second an immediate prohibition endorsed 'S' plus a defect notice, and a third a defect notice.

DoT vehicle examiner Ronald Willett maintained that, when they visited the firm's premises they were told all the vehicles there, apart from the one over the pit, were available for work.

Denying that was so, Paul Steed said one vehicle was parked up waiting for a part to come from Germany. He agreed the vehicle was taxed and had a current test certificate and that it could have been used, but said there was no intention to use it.

Maynard Steed said they'd had quite a lot of problems with inspections by contractors over the last two years. They had been let down. They had changed contractors and they had been put in a quite awkward position, as the vehicle examiner had found things not being recorded. Paul Steed said his parents were retiring and he was seeking a licence in his own name. The current licence would be surrendered at the end of next month. He had his own plans, which he would discuss when his licence application came before the commissioner next month.

Maynard Steed said they could not get good commercial fitters in their area. Consequently, he'd had to bring his brother-in-law out of retirement. It was getting too much for them both.

Paul Steed said the missing records were due to a communication problem with the maintenance contractor, but the commissioner said he was surprised that, following the last public inquiry, and previous public inquiries in 1990 and 1991, there were still gaps in the administration. Asked why they had not had the driver defect reporting system working properly since the last public inquiry, Paul Steed said because of the attitude of the drivers.

They now had a system where drivers had to hand in a defect report with the vehicle's keys.

Maynard Steed said it had all been on his back. He had been working six days a week but he just could not get on top of it. When the licence was reduced to four vehicles they had been able to cope, but when it went back up to seven vehicles it had put too much load on to them.

The other partner, his wife, had nothing to do with the day-to-day running of the business.

Reserving decision after hearing financial evidence in private, Brigadier Boyd said he required evidence the firm had £14,000 available capital by the end of the week, if they wished to produce it, though he accepted the situation was complicated by the transfer of funds to the son.

He warned he was seriously considering revocation and the possible disqualification of Maynard Steed, if not his wife as well.

▼ Maintenance

Owner driver warned

OWNER driver David Wheelband escaped with a warning about his future maintenance standards, when he appeared at a Wimbourne disciplinary inquiry before Western deputy traffic commissioner John Robins. Mr Wheelband, of 24 Drake Avenue, Chickerell, Near Weymouth, Dorset, has a one-vehicle national O-licence. Giving a formal warning, Mr Robins said he would be asking the Vehicle Inspectorate to carry out an unannounced spot check on Mr Wheelband's maintenance standards. If there were any further problems he would be back before the commissioner, when it was likely a much less lenient view would be taken.

ur weeks

ber 1995, had been imposed at the Test Station when the vehicles had gone in for voluntary inspections.

Mr Hodgson said it was understood that vehicles sent in for smoke and headlamp alignment tests at the test station would not receive prohibition notices, and it was assumed the same applied to vehicles sent in for voluntary inspection.

It defeated the object, and would discourage people from using the service if they were going to get prohibitions imposed on vehicles sent in for inspection.

Questioned by the commissioner, Mr Dalton said that, in future, he would have his vehicles inspected every six weeks whether they were on the road or not.

He undertook:

- **To introduce a drivers' nil daily defect reporting system**
- **To have his vehicles inspected every six weeks at the Beverley Test Station**
- **That the inspections would be preplanned on a wallchart**
- **To write to his drivers pointing out they must take the appropriate break at Manchester Airport**
- **And to enter a contractual agreement with Fairway Rhodes Travel to carry out repairs to his vehicles.**

City Traveller: also banned from registering any more local services by commissioner

Mr Waterworth said he was happy with the new improved system but there was a penalty to be paid for the previous lax attitude. CBW

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▼ UK

Resort security moves pay off

Scarborough coach park patrol deters vandals

by William Golden

IMPROVED security at Scarborough's coach parks has already proved effective, with two potential vandal attacks averted.

More than 70 coaches have been attacked in the North Yorkshire resort in the last two years, prompting Scarborough Borough Council to install CCTV in the William Street coach park and a night watchman at the main Esplanade coach park.

The night patrol was introduced on 1 April and Mike Clements, director of technical services, said: "On two occasions the security firm has moved on youths congregating in the coach park in the early hours. So two potential incidents already have been averted.

"We recognise the value of the coach trade to Scarborough and a conscious step has been taken to provide safe, secure overnight parking for operators."

As well as improved security, Scarborough has one of the cheapest coach parking charges in UK resorts - £3.50 a day. Coaches may park free from 7pm to 9am.

This policy has won praise from Barry Rennison, vice-chairman of the Bradford and District Coach Operators Association, whose members are at odds with Craven District Council over increased charges in Skipton (*CBW*, 27 April).

Mr Rennison, who is general manager of Independent Coachways, said: "The borough council deserves credit for a good-value coach parking charge and the introduction of these security measures."

He compared this with Craven District Council, which had introduced a £5 charge for up to four hours parking in Skipton. Mr Rennison said his organisation was still in discussions with council officials in a bid to get the charges reduced in Skipton, which is a popular coffee stop for his coaches en route to the Lancashire resorts.

But he was not optimistic, adding: "To cap it all, they have the barefaced cheek to charge passengers 10p to use the loo!"

▼ UK

Free Botany Bay coach visits offer

COACH parties are being offered free admission to Botany Bay Villages, in Chorley, Lancashire, from Monday to Saturday, from now until 13 July.

The multi-storey attraction, which is at junction 8 of the M61, opened last December and already more than 100,000 people have visited it. Goods on display include arts and crafts, antiques, reproduction pine furniture, ceramics and books.

General manager Matthew Titherington said: "This is an exclusive offer to the coach operator and group organiser. Botany Bay Villages is an ideal attraction for a break when travelling north or south, or as an alternative day out from the region's main tourist towns."

No pre-booking is necessary and drivers will receive a luncheon voucher and goody bag. They should claim their free passes from the groups booking office on arrival.

CBW

Glass act: some goods on sale at Botany Bay Villages

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Mission: Chris Wales aims to take CTC on to next phase

▼ UK

Chris at CTC helm

CHRIS Wales, general sales manager of Wightlink Isle of Wight Ferries, is the new chairman of the Coach Tourism Council (CTC). He was appointed at the May board meeting last week, in succession to Gerry Topiol, who had been chairman since the CTC's founding six years ago. John Johnson, md of Johnsons Coach Travel, was elected vice-chairman and David Fenton was elected treasurer.

Mr Wales, 48, said: "The promotion of the coach industry has come a long way since the foundation of the CTC and I look forward to developing and strengthening the organisation and carrying it into its next phase."

He has spent most of his working life in the ferry industry, initially with Townsend Thoresen, and then with Sealink. He also had a short spell at Eurotunnel. Mr Wales was chairman of the Institute of Travel and Tourism from 1993 to 1995 and was recently elected to the committee of the Chartered Institute of Marketing Travel Industry Group.

The CTC is the promotional body of the coach industry and was set up to increase public awareness and promote the image of tourism by coach. This year, membership has increased by 25 per cent, with an average of one company joining each week.

▼ Europe

Sally's key role

Sales teams merger 'vital for future growth'

by William Golden

SALLY Ferries has said its decision to axe five group sales staff, including UK sales manager Roger Simister, was part of a reorganisation programme designed to make it a leading player in the cross-Channel market (*CBW*, 4 May).

The Ramsgate-based operator has merged its coach and retail sales teams, with retail sales manager Lorraine Jacques at the helm, and Sue Whale, senior sales executive, working with groups. There now are three senior sales executives.

Sally Ferries' marketing director Linda McLeod said the moves were part of a reorganisation designed to turn Sally into the most efficient and cost-effective business afloat.

The introduction of a fast-craft service next Spring will mean more frequent services and Ms McLeod said Sally must better serve its retail and groups market, if the company and its trade partners was to enjoy mutual benefit.

"Sally will become a key player in the cross-Channel market," she said. "We have to develop the most effective sales forces to meet the demands from the travel trade this will create."

● Phil Hankin, one of the casualties of the shake-up, has said he is keen to stay in the industry. Mr Hankin, who was sales manager, group travel, said this week he was pursuing a number of options.

▼ UK

Revving up for show

OPERATORS across the UK will be able to benefit from a special Travel by Coach promotion from SMMT, the organisers of the British International Motor Show at the NEC, in Birmingham, in October.

The 1996 event, which will have more than £150 million worth of exhibits and stands, will be the largest show to be staged in Britain. Advance tickets are available to coach operators on the trade days, 16 and 17 October; the preview day on 18 October; and the public open days, from 19 to 27 October. These will all be on a sale or return basis. Tickets for trade days are only available to operators carrying groups of bona fide trade visitors.

Special Travel by Coach posters and information leaflets are available free of charge to operators, who should contact the SMMT exhibitions department on 0 171 235 7000. CBW

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Amsterdam	14C/57F	Oslo	14F/57F
Berlin	8C/46F	Paris	10C/50F
Brussels	9C/48F	Rome	21C/70F
Dublin	12C/54F	Stockholm	11C/52F
Lisbon	16C/61F	Vienna	16C/61F
Luxembourg	15C/59F	Zurich	18C/64F

DIESEL PRICES

(Courtesy AA Roadwatch)

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.56	Luxembourg	0.46
Belgium	0.56	Netherlands	0.56
Eire	0.58	Norway	0.75
France	0.54	Portugal	0.47
Germany	0.50	Spain	0.48
Greece	0.43	Sweden	0.65
Italy	0.59	Switzerland	0.66

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	15.72 Sch/£	Italy	2,310 Lire/£
Belgium	45.85 BFr/£	Netherlands	2.50 Gld/£
Denmark	8.66 K/£	Norway	9.67 NKr/£
Eire	0.94 Punt/£	Portugal	230 Es/£
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Questions & Answers

When is coach a bus?

Q **Many school bus routes in this area are registered local services, theoretically available for all members of the public, but largely patronised by school children, some of whom pay fares but many of whom are supplied with free passes by the education authority. Some services are operated commercially and others under contract to the council (not just the education authority). If such services are operated with a bus it appears that no seatbelts are necessary. What is the situation where such services are operated with a coach?**

RM, East Lothian

A Taking the easy point first: irrespective of the use to which the vehicle is being put, seatbelts are not required if the vehicle falls within the statutory definition of a bus. That is to say it has more than 16 passenger seats, a gross weight exceeding 7.5 tonnes and, by virtue of its construction, a top speed of less than 60 mph.

A vehicle otherwise to this specification but with a maximum speed in excess of 60 mph is, technically, and most certainly for these purposes, a 'coach'. Many modern vehicles which to all appearance are buses can exceed 60 mph and, therefore, have to comply with the regulation applicable to coaches.

A coach does not have to be fitted with seatbelts if it is being used in the provision of a bus service of a description specified in paragraph 2 of the Schedule to the Fuel Duty Grant (Eligible Bus Services) Regulation 1985 or if it is otherwise being used wholly or mainly for the purpose of providing a transport service for the general public (Regulation 48A (5)).

In summary, paragraph 2 to the Schedule refers to a local bus service which is not 'provided or secured' by a local education authority, on which at least half of the seats are available for use by the general public and the service is regularly used by the general public, who can make journeys between any two stopping places at fares which are not a deterrent to use. There also must be arrangements for the general public to inform themselves about the details of the service and there must be no signs on the vehicle suggesting it is not available for use by the general public.

Note that Regulation 48A(5) also exempts coaches 'otherwise being used ... etc' as well as those where the fuel duty rebate 'test' applies. This might, for example, apply to services where the journey length was such that registration as a local bus service was not necessary, or even for registered services on which fuel duty rebate was, for any reason, not claimed.

But, either way, there has to be availability and use by the 'general public'. This term is not defined in the regulations and, as far as I am aware, has not been tested in the courts. It was much debated in this column and elsewhere some seven or eight years ago in relation to eligibility for fuel duty rebate.

It was my view then, and now, that fare-paying pupils (whether paying directly or by virtue of the operator being remunerated for accepting a pass) are part of the general public and their presence in sufficient numbers will determine eligibility for fuel duty rebate where applicable and thus the exemption from the need to fit seatbelts on coaches used in providing these sort of publicly-available services.

I should add that this would not, of course, apply to an exclusive school contract provision, or if the service (even if a registered local bus service) was provided or secured by the local education authority. In many cases LEA involvement may be less than obvious.

While some local authorities still have different departments securing subsidised school, social services and 'Transport Act' passenger transport, many have now centralised the tendering process and control of passenger transport needs into a single unit. Where this applies, and the contract documents do not make it clear, it might be prudent to seek the written advice of the authority whether or not any tendered service was secured by them acting as an education authority.

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154 Marksman will answer more questions on 1 June 1996

What about standees?

Q **What is the position in relation to standing passengers on vehicles fitted with seatbelts?**

BD, Bucks

A The fitment of seatbelts will not alter the number of standees permitted on any vehicle. Nor will it prevent children being standees for there is no requirement for them to actually use seatbelts provided or even to sit in the seats to which they are fitted. All the new rules require is that, where the type of vehicle and its use for the carriage of children bring it in to scope of the new regulations, there shall be as many forward-facing seats fitted with seatbelts as there are children being carried.

Is TV rule rescinded?

Q **It used to be said that curtains should be fitted and drawn at night on coaches where television or video was in use. Has this rule been rescinded? I frequently see coaches on the motorways at night where TV type of pictures can clearly be seen by following or passing motorists.**

CM, Leeds

A It is a curious coincidence you should ask this question, for I had noticed an increase in exactly what you describe. I have discovered that, prior to the 1986 Construction & Use Regulations, it was an offence to have a TV or video screen in such a position that, in use, it was visible to the driver (directly or by reflection) or in such circumstances that it might cause distraction to the driver of any other vehicle.

Perhaps recognising that the presence of a moving picture in a vehicle was no longer such a novelty that it might distract other road users, the current (1986) regulations only retain the ban on it being visible to the driver of the vehicle in which it is used.

Although not part of your question, it may be of general interest for me to add that the 1986 Regulations do make express provision for a driver to be able to see a visual display which shows the road adjacent to the vehicle (eg with a rearview camera) or a display which records the state of the vehicle or its equipment, to locate the road on which it is on, or to assist the driver to reach his destination. Thus screens displaying a route, details of delays or congestion and, presumably, even a closed-circuit view of the interior of the coach or bus, can lawfully be visible to the driver. CBW

'School bus' takes on a new meaning

BUS passengers have been able to relax with a bit of yoga or brush up on their Italian as they travel around Merseyside during Adult Learners Week, which ends this weekend.

Tutors from local colleges travelled on three routes between 9am and 3pm, giving mini mobile lessons on a wide variety of subjects, including yoga, Italian and Russian, as part of a plan to teach people that learning can be fun and carries on beyond the schoolroom.

If the idea spreads to the evenings perhaps appropriate on-the-buses nights could be held.

PSV industry flying high?

JUST in case you thought the coach and bus world was isolated from the rest of humanity, think again.

As managements have piloted privatised companies to dizzy heights, with flotations, and profiles in the *Financial Times*, so the industry has taken on a new fascination.

Trevor Smallwood: example

Consequently it comes as no surprise to see the words 'bus' and 'profit' appear in the same sentence when analysts extol the virtues of investment in transport stock.

Although we at *CBW* need no further convincing, it is reassuring to find the gospel being spread far and wide by some most unlikely publications.

For example, on a recent Air UK flight your editor was drawn to a fascinating article in the in-flight magazine on the ups and downs of management buyouts. First picture was of the FirstBus gas-powered Dart. Turn the page and there sits Trevor Smallwood at his executive desk.

Mr Smallwood is heralded as a shining example of a man who guided a buyout to success.

It makes good reading until the final paragraph, which refers to another member of the original Badgerline buyout team, Keith Ahlers.

Mr Ahlers, a former bus conductor who made it to northern regional director, is apparently the very epitome of what management buyouts are all about.

However, the in-flight readers are spared the sequel to this story. Mr Ahlers had been on extended leave since mid-December. His resignation from the group was confirmed at the start of 1996 "to pursue other interests". CBW

Keith Ahlers: other interests

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Why did the media miss this interesting little fact?

From Tom Hawthorne

On 1 May a joint operation took place involving Sussex Police, the Department of Transport, and East Sussex County Council education department and detailed examinations were carried out on a total of 32 vehicles used to carry school children to four secondary schools in East Sussex.

The exercise was carried out with full publicity involving TV cameras and local newspapers.

Sussex Police said 22 vehicles were found to have defects, three vehicles with immediate prohibitions and three with delayed prohibitions.

I wholeheartedly support the Department of Transport in its efforts to ensure all operators are running safe vehicles.

We have all heard it said so often but it should be in every operator's interests to see proper checks being performed, however disruptive they may be.

However, the reason for my letter was to highlight one interesting point that was not mentioned by the media. Four of the vehicles examined were owned and run by some of the schools themselves and all four vehicles were found to have defects, one of which had a prohibition order placed on it.

If the vehicle with the prohibition had been involved in an emergency the children could not have escaped from it through the back door as a catch was faulty.

Although we must focus our attention on the fact there were defects and five prohibitions on vehicles operated by PSV operators, it is rather interesting, don't you think, that the media chose not to mention that defects and a prohibition were placed on vehicles owned by two schools involved and, therefore, presumably by East Sussex County Council itself.

The Meridian news clearly ran with the headline "Coach Operators". I would have thought an equally newsworthy angle to the story could have focused on some of the vehicles being owned by the council.

I only hope those responsible for the maintenance of the schools' own vehicles are brought to account in the same manner as the PSV operators involved because the safety of children is important no matter whose vehicle they are carried on.

Tom Hawthorne
Partner
RDH Services
Plumpton
East Sussex

Write to: The Editor
Coach and Bus Week
EMAP Automotive Publishing
Wentworth House
Wentworth Street
Peterborough PE1 1DS
or fax 01733 467154

Keep those letters rolling in. If requested, we will publish them anonymously, but always include your full name (ie first name and surname), address and telephone number

Letter of the week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

Egg on their faces

From Martin Perry

In common, no doubt, with many in our industry, I read with great interest your review of the first production Optare Excels (CBW, 4 May) as these superb new accessible buses take to the streets — and your front cover was so succinct, with the suggestion that vehicles of this quality will bring back our passengers.

It seems such a pity that this new high standard of vehicle looks likely to be denied to prospective passengers in my county, following the decisions made at county hall recently with regard to school transport.

In a rural county such as Herefordshire, operators have for the past 50 years built their businesses on a mix of school contracts, private hire and rural bus routes. In the most recent of those years, the stage carriage element of their daily schedules has, in 99 per cent of cases, been tendered routes subsidised by the county council (commercial services in this part of the world being a fascinating rarity) and, for the past couple of years, there has been a steady encouragement (latterly with financial incentives) for operators to provide accessible, user-friendly service buses.

Optare Excel, superb new accessible bus, but...

Linked with good school contracts, it has been possible for well-managed small fleets to build up a local network of tendered off-peak 'socially-necessary' bus routes with costs met by this happy creation of a day's work for a bus and driver.

Following the decision by Hereford and Worcester County Council to require that ALL vehicles used on school bus duties in the county will HAVE to be fitted with seatbelts in early 1997, it seems certain that this traditional and essential mix of work by rural operators will be set back in many respects —not least of which will be the ban on side-facing seats on all coaches and buses, and the enforced fitment of seatbelts.

This will instantly preclude 'proper' service buses (and, of course, that includes the new Excel and all the other equivalent modern designs with side-facing seats which, being buses, will be unlikely to have seatbelts).

What would be the point of buying a splendid new service bus for your local bus contracts (held with one department of the county council, and purchased with their financial encouragement) only to find that you were actively prevented from utilising it on the other part of your business (ie school transport tendered by another department of the same authority).

The amount of egg on the faces of the county public transport co-ordination team can but be imagined, as the prospect of modern, accessible, people-friendly buses on the county's roads fizzles out before their eyes but, more to the point, how sad for any potential elderly or infirm bus passenger as, to meet the belts-only rule, country bus operators revert en masse to elderly Dominant and Supreme coaches, complete with cobbled-together seatbelts, to provide our public transport into the next millennium.

So much for transport planning.

Martin Perry
Bromyard Omnibus Co
Bromyard
Herefordshire

No jobs for life

From Raymond Taylor

Your article on Stagecoach in Portugal (*CBW*, 13 April) made very interesting reading with regard to progress to date and as much as Stagecoach is ever likely to reveal of detailed future proposals.

We differ, however, in our interpretation of the labour situation in Portugal. You claim that there "jobs are for life and the concept of redundancy is not really acknowledged." While this may be true of former directors, it is certainly not the case at platform level in the industry.

The enclosed cuttings from Lamego in the Upper Douro area are typical of local concerns. In the course of the last two years EAVT of Lamego has changed from entirely crewed vehicles to OPO with obvious employment implications.

Similarly the transfer of a schools contract from a local operator of long standing to the local football club with no history as a public operator has caused considerable anxiety. This surely would not happen if jobs really were for life.

Raymond Taylor
Almeida PSV Services
Rutherglen
Glasgow

Some more facts

From John W Smith

Your very informative article about Stagecoach's Portuguese acquisition refers to "Barraquerio, an Algarve-based conglomerate, owning over 60 per cent of the Portuguese bus operations."

In fact, 44 per cent of the share capital of Barraquerio is now owned by the major French transport operator, CFEA Group, the recent successful bidder for the franchise to run British Rail's Network SouthCentral.

Furthermore, Brazilian financial interests are thought to control Vimeca, Stagecoach Lisbon's neighbouring operator, as well as controlling the largest bus operators in suburban Oporto and in the north-east of Portugal. Thus, in the past five years, the suburban and interurban Portuguese bus industry has changed from being a purely Portuguese affair, dominated by the nationalised operator, to a potential battlefield of international groups.

May I add a couple of other points to the information in your article? You say that the services of Stagecoach Portugal "Stop many miles short of the city suburbs." Several of the routes run to within 10 miles of the centre of Lisbon and, with the urban sprawl of recent years, one could reasonably regard much of Stagecoach's operating area as part of greater Lisbon.

Finally, while Stagecoach runs trolleybuses in New Zealand, South West Trains, and a transporter bridge in Middlesbrough, the Sintra Atlantics historic tramway is a new challenge for the group. You stated there are plans to extend the tram route to the historic centre of Sintra. In fact, the tramway originally ran right through the main shopping street and on another kilometre or more to the ancient Royal Palace, a great tourist attraction. Following the acquisition of the line by the local bus company with a view to closure, the section between the railway station and the palace was closed in 1954 but the council insisted on the maintenance of a Summer service between Sintra station and the seaside.

The 1974 revolution and the upheaval of subsequent nationalisation led to five years' suspension of the tram service. By the time the service was resumed in 1980, the track through the shopping centre had completely disappeared under a new road surface and the trams cannot currently get to the railway station.

John W Smith
Bedford
Beds

Britain known bus company has owned foreign subsidiaries for some time but, until recently, was conspicuous by its absence from Europe. Andrew Jarosz reports

Stagecoach's European footho

FLASHBACK: to *Coach and Bus Week*, 13 April 1996

Coaches no problem

From Ashley Bailey

As one of the "strong car lobby" referred to in the editorial (*CBW*, 6 April) I would like to make the following points. I drive some 40,000 to 50,000 miles per annum, on business and for pleasure. Most of these miles are on our motorway network. At no time can I recall being held up for more than a few seconds by a coach in the outside lane of a motorway.

Where I have been delayed by a coach I am sensible enough to realise that my delay, amounting to a matter of seconds, is not significant. However, there could have been 50 people on that coach, who would all have been delayed if they were unable to use the outside lane. The real delays to the "car lobby" are caused by drivers who use the motorways of the UK on an infrequent basis, those who just do not know how to use a three-lane road. They are the real threat. A motorway test, as part of a new more stringent driving test, should be considered.

Finally, I would say that I have only once seen a coach being driven (what I consider) dangerously. Compared to the hundreds of stupid acts I see carried out by car drivers each year this pales into insignificance. Please do not assume that all car drivers want a third lane ban for coaches. I am sure that, if you asked for letters of support from us car/van drivers, you would be pleased at the level of response.

Good luck with your campaign.

Ashley Bailey
Dursley
Glos

Procedure needed

From Dr Caroline Cahm

I was very encouraged you (*CBW*, 13 April) recently urged operators to follow a standard procedure for dealing with complaints instead of following their noses when faced with an angry customer. There is an urgent need for a well-publicised nationwide system for dealing with complaints. So far, the impact of the voluntary code from the CPT has been patchy. Too often customers are discouraged from making a complaint through lack of confidence that the company will do anything about it. They may even be unsure where or to whom to address their complaint.

The suggested procedure, which stresses the importance of never belittling a customer's complaint because, in most cases, the grievance is very real and justified in the complainant's honest opinion, is helpful. But I was dismayed at the advice a company should refuse point blank to deal with any complaint until it is in writing. Although this may be a more constructive approach than promising to phone back and failing to do so, as happens all too often, I can think of nothing more offputting than a refusal to deal with any complaint not in writing.

Of course, a passenger should be encouraged to write a letter but to insist on this may mean a delay in registering and dealing with the problem. The complainant may simply give up. a few passengers may have a problem which makes it difficult to write a letter: are they to be discouraged from making a complaint? Some companies now have a special careline telephone answering service which customers can use to make suggestions or complaints. Should this not be encouraged?

Customers need to be confident about making a complaint and getting a reasonable response. Even though most companies deal conscientiously with complaints, without a properly-publicised people-friendly system followed throughout the industry, passengers will remain doubtful that bus companies really do welcome their custom and want to help them when anything goes wrong. The new rail operators have to have a complaints procedure. Should this not also be a requirement for bus operators?

Dr Caroline Cahm
Chairman
The National Federation of Bus Users
Southsea
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Ref: 6808

1988 PRIVATE SCANIA JONCKHEERE P99, 74 SEATS
Exterior Blue and Grey, Interior Grey Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, 2 Monitors Upstairs, 1 Monitor Downstairs, Video, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Telma, Boot Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Webasto, Tinted Windows, Crew Seat, Fridge and Sink.
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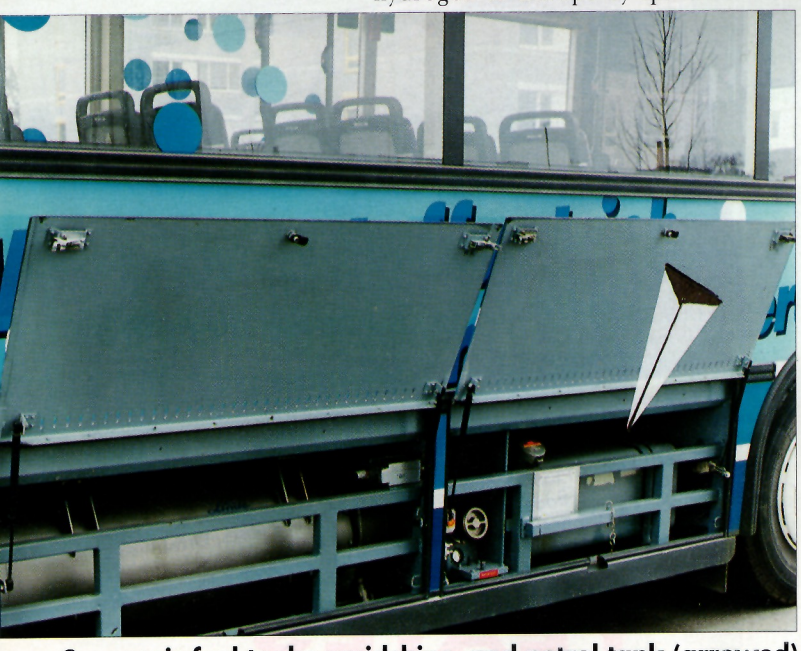
H-bus starts two-year trial

The first very low-emission bus in Europe fitted with a hydrogen-powered engine is now in regular service in Germany. Use of hydrogen is taking control of exhaust emissions to levels well below those anticipated under EURO-III proposals for 1999. But how safe is the gas-powered vehicle? Bill Godwin reports

EUROPE'S first very low-emission bus fitted with a 12-litre dual-fuel spark ignition engine to enable it to run on hydrogen has now been completed by MAN. Development of the hydrogen-powered vehicle was funded jointly by the Bavarian government — MAN's 'home country' — and the European Union as part of a major research programme associated with the Euro Quebec Hydro-Hydrogen Project (EQHHP).

This revolves around a long-term plan to import hydrogen to Europe by special vessels to meet the requirement for adequate supplies for a variety of users. It is not expected, however, that hydrogen-powered transport will be ready for wider public service applications before the next century when industrial scale production of the fuel will allow it to be competitive with others.



Cryogenic fuel tanks amidships, and petrol tank (arrowed)

After its presentation at the Hanover Trade Fair, at the end of April, the new experimental MAN bus was due to enter revenue service in Erlangen (west of Nuremberg) and, later, in the Munich transport fleet. An initial evaluation period of 24 months will provide valuable operating and engineering experience which, so far, has been limited to research applications in Europe and the USA. The development is seen as part of the long-term commitment of assessing environmental compatibility and the potential for cutting pollutants in urban areas.

The 11.52-metre long MAN SL type bus, with a capacity of 92 passengers (41 seated) is fitted with three cryogenic tanks to carry liquid hydrogen at -253C at a pressure of 3.5 bar. For optimum safety the Line-built tanks — each of 190-litre capacity - are mounted within the wheelbase of the bus. A petrol tank is also provided to extend operational range as hydrogen supplies are still limited while refuelling of HO is still confined to a specially-designed station which requires from 20 to 25 minutes for a full charge. Operating range on hydrogen is around 250 km.

There are a number of fail-safe devices as well as measures to prevent injury from contact with fuel

In addition to the conversion of the MAN U 2866 UH engine to spark ignition other modifications include individual hydrogen 'blower' valves as well as petrol injectors for each of the six cylinders. These valves are

Based on an MAN SL, Europe's first hydrogen-fuelled city bus has a dual-fuel installation to extend range using petrol

electromagnetically controlled.

The hydrogen fuel system incorporates a heat exchanger which gasifies the liquid fuel for injection at ambient temperature. The electronic fuel injection system comprises Bosch Motronic equipment modified to accommodate both hydrogen and petrol operation, a control unit for the HO injector receiving signals from the Motronic, and a device to maintain tank pressure as fuel is used.

All three double-walled stainless steel tanks are linked and have integral hearing elements to allow contents to be balanced. Another safety feature is incorporated in the induction system which will shut down the fuel supply if liquid hydrogen is detected in the feed.

Use of hydrogen in public service operation is taking control of exhaust emission to levels well below those anticipated under EURO-III proposals for 1999. There are no CO emissions whatsoever, while HC is down to 0.04 g/kWh. In the 13-stage test under ECE R 49 rules Nox was limited to 0.4 g/kWh.

A catalytic converter is fitted in the exhaust line. German automotive experts rate operational safety of hydrogen-fuelled vehicles on the same level as that for CNG or petrol engines.

Nonetheless, it is essential, far more than for other fuels, to ensure that the public's perception of the use of hydrogen is backed by special safety measures all of which have been approved by the German automotive testing organisation TuV.

They include, among others, special gas-tight flooring to prevent leakages of gasified HO from spreading over the entire passenger space. Unacceptably high pressure in the fuel tanks is vented through two roof-mounted relief valves. All fuel lines are monitored by pressure sensors to detect faults.

Similarly, there are leak sensors in the heat exchanger and near the injectors. If any of these are actuated fuel supplies are cut off and the ceiling vents in the saloon are raised automatically. An interlock with the fuelling gantry prevents operation of the engine starter while connected. There are a number of other fail-safe devices as well as measures to prevent injury from contact with cryogenic fuel.

'It is essential to ensure the public's perception of hydrogen use is backed by special safety measures'

Maximum output of the engine in the hydrogen mode is 140 kW at 2200/min with a max torque of 750 Nm at 1000/min. The naturally-aspirated engine produces 170 kW at 2200/min, when running on petrol, with torque raised to 840 Nm at 1000/min. CBW

HYDROGEN FACTFILE

HC emission in hydrogen operation — 0.04 g/kWH — is caused largely through lubricant burning up.

Use of hydrogen in a fuel cell-equipped hybrid bus is due to begin shortly in the Italian city of Brescia. Electricity produced in the gas/air fuel cell powers an electric motor in the vehicle developed by Ansaldo.

A Canadian specialist in this sector, Ballard Power Systems Inc of North Vancouver, has reported that SPFC fuel cells (Solid Polymer Fuel Cell) are approaching commercialisation for road transport applications. The company is currently evaluating a city bus powered by an SPFC producing up to 200 kW and hopes to introduce a number of other demonstration projects in fleet use in 1996-7.

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MOSELEY

The Long and the short of it

Latest Van Hool/Volvos for Scottish operator differ in length

by Mike Morgan

LONG'S Coaches of Scotland has maintained its standardisation on the Van Hool/Volvo combination with its two latest purchases from Moseley Distributors.

Although similar and matching in most respects, the new pair differ in length and colour. One is a B10M with 12-metre bodywork liveried for Jascot Travel, the Edinburgh-based incoming tour operator. The second coach is the less common 10-metre B9M with 36 Royal Class reclining seats, rear floor-mounted toilet and Sutrak air-conditioning.

Company owner, Irvine Long, says the B9M is the best small coach for passenger comfort: "It's like a big coach but slightly shorter," he said, "and small groups feel comfortable in this size of vehicle."

Long's has bought second-hand B9Ms in the past, usually keeping two in its fleet. However, this is its first new one.

The B10M expands the Salsburgh-based company to 11 coaches.

Mr Long says the extra vehicle has been acquired "because we've got the work."

It, too, has air-conditioning and lap belts, but the toilet on the 49/53 seater is a centre sunken demountable type.

KIRKBY

Plaxton Premieres prove perfect for private hire

FIFE coach operator Moffat & Williamson has upgraded its fleet with three new Plaxton Premieres on Volvo B10M chassis. They are used on a broad range of UK and European private hire work.

The three coaches — two Premiere 350s and one 320 — were supplied by Kirkby Coach & Bus.

"We looked at what was available from a number of manufacturers and dealers," said director Ian Williamson. "The Volvo/Plaxton combination from Kirkby was ideal both in terms of vehicle specification and in the deal we were able to strike."

Moffat & Williamson was formed just over 50 years ago by Mr Moffat's parents and currently runs 56 vehicles including 21 full-size coaches.

In the last few years it has reverted to its core coaching operation after a period of mixing coaches with local service bus work. Mr Williamson said: "Now we are concentrating on coaches with a fleet which ranges from mini-coaches to a 67-seat Plaxton Paramount 4000."

SCANIA

Upmarket gamble pays off

Fourth Scania Century shows firm is out of the low-cost jungle

by Mike Morgan

EXECUTIVE Travel's fourth Scania Century in less than 12 months is confirmation that the Wolverhampton-based company has turned the corner away from contract-orientated business to one targeting customers appropriate to its trading name.

Run by Gary and Sue Dixon, Executive Travel learned that survival in the local coach market is too closely tied to success or failure on low-margin contracts. One significant switch of contracts to a competitor can jeopardise the whole business.

To escape from the low-cost jungle, the Dixons decided they had to take a bold step forward, lift the quality, boost the image and invest.

Hence the first Irizar Century-bodied Scania K113, then a second, followed by a third and now a fourth.

The quartet consists of a pair of two-axle coaches and, with the latest delivery, a pair of tri-axles. All are used on UK and European Tour work alongside four other coaches, including a twin-deck band bus.

Mr Dixon confesses that it's been hard work. He said: "We decided to change the vehicles and then we had to go out and get the work."

However, he says it paid off, with clients requesting Executive's type of coach. Mr Dixon said: "I wasn't known before I had the Scanias, but people are now aware of the type of tackle we run.

"This type of vehicle creates a real impression when it rolls up."

The latest coach has standard-spec Comfort-Shift gearbox, Telma and Webasto.

Body spec includes 49/51 recliners, air-conditioning, video/two monitors, toilet, fridge, drinks machine, super mirrors, driver's bunk, seatbelts, magazine nets and driver's door.

● Picture shows Scania Bus and Coach UK salesman, Bob Nevitt (left) with Gary and Sue Dixon.

OPTARE

Vectas in Hutchison fleet now total nine

HUTCHISON Coaches of Overtown, Scotland, has added two further Optare Vectas to its fleet, bringing the total operated to nine.

Hutchison managing director Stuart Anderson said: "I am very impressed with the reliability and quality of these vehicles. I was in the market for replacement for some of my older vehicles and the Vecta came out once again as the perfect choice."

The buses are fitted with 42 seats and have a standee capacity of 16 with a saloon luggage pen over the nearside front wheelarch. All other interior trim surfaces are easy clean laminates and GRP.

The Vecta is based on MAN 11.190 chassis.

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CBW Coach and Bus Week

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1989 G TOYOTA OPTIMO GL, 21 seater, fawn interior, very clean, MoT Aug 1996.
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1993 K VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE, 49 seats, toilet, radio/PA/cassette, double glazed.
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1989 (F) VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 3200, 53 reclining seats, low mileage, one owner, MoT 1997 ..... **£P.O.A.**

1987 (D) DAF SB2300 DUPLE 340, 53 reclining seats & crew, centre toilet, continental door, retrimmed, all white, MoT July 1996 ..... **£39,500**

1986 (D) LEYLAND LYNX, semi auto, Gardner engine, 51 seats plus 22 standees, repanelled and retrimmed, choice of two, MoTs July – September 1996..... **£34,500**

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VOLVOS

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1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 reclining seats, double glazing, Telma, pannier lockers, Webasto, new test.....**£57,500**

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1984 VOLVO B10M BERKHOF ESPRIT, 53 reclining seats, courier, radio/PA.....**£32,500**

1984 VOLVO B10 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 recliners, courier, centre demountable toilet/continental door, radio/PA.....**£34,500**

1983 VOLVO B10M CAETANO ALGARVE, 49 reclining seats, centre toilet, continental door, radio/PA.....**£32,500**

1983 A VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, auto transmission, Webasto, d/glazed, boiler, fridge, wired for TV, test Aug '96.....**£29,500**

OTHERS

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1994 SEPT M BOVA FUTURA FHD, 49 sable reclining seats, courier, centre sunken toilet, pre-heater, bunk, d/glazed, 2 monitors, boiler, fridge, full air conditioning, low mileage.....**£120,000**

1993 K SCANIA K113 VAN HOOL ALIZEE H, 49 reclining seats, courier, centre sunken demountable toilet/continental door, retarder, d/glazed, bunk.....**£107,500**

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1990 DAF 2305 CAETANO ALGARVE, 53 reclining seats, courier, tinted glass, radio/PA.....**£67,500**

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1985 LEYLAND DOYEN EXECUTIVE, 16 fully luxury reclining seats + 12 rear lounge, full centre galley with all facilities.....**£18,500**

1983 LEYLAND NATIONAL II BUS, Leyland engine, 2 door, 31 seats, 25 standing, clean.....**£14,000**

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1990 DAF SB3000 Caetano Algarve II, 51 reclining seats and courier seat, wired for video, rear nearside saloon toilet, very long MoT, immaculate condition, available immediately.

1989 SETRA 215HD, 49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, drinks machine, absolutely immaculate condition, available shortly.

1987 MCW METRORIDER, 23 bus seats plus 7 standees. MoT 5/9/96.

1987 LEYLAND ROYAL TIGER, Van Hool Alizee, 51 reclining seats and courier seat, video and two monitors, rear saloon toilet. Very long MoT. Exterior white.

1987 OPTARE CITY PACER AUTOMATIC, Volkswagen diesel, bus spec, 25 seater.

1985 MAN SR280 HL, 53 reclining seats, courier seat, one owner from new. New MoT.

1985 DAF MB200, Plaxton Paramount, 49 reclining seats, drinks machine, wired for video, toilet at rear offside. New MoT.

1984 LAG Panoramic, 49 reclining seats, toilet, courier seat, wired for video, in nice clean condition, available immediately.

1984 BOVA FUTURA, 53 reclining seats, recent retrim, graffiti style, excellent condition.

1983 DAF MB200, Caetano Alpha GT, 53 reclining passenger seats, power plug door. Very long MoT.

1982 VOLVO B58, Duple Dominant IV, 46 reclining seats, toilet, semi automatic, double glazed, power door.

1980 VOLVO B58, Plaxton Supreme V Express, 53 seater.

1979 BEDFORD YMT Duple Dominant II, power door, 53 seater.

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TOYOTA OPTIMO

1994 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-HE 12M
49/53 recliners, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with roller blinds, wired TV/video, finished white.
M.O.T. OCTOBER 1996

1993 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PREMIERE 350 12M
53 recliners, red/black stripe moquette, rear continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, courier seat, power entrance door, finished white/orange.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1993 DENNIS JAVELIN CAETANO ALGARVE II 12M
53 recliners, beige/brown moquette, double glazed tinted windows, curtains, courier seat, power entrance door, finished duo blue.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1991 (August) BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M
51/53 seats, beige/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, driver's sleeping berth, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished white/duo blue.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1989 (August) LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLE 320 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, double glazed tinted side windows, pull-down blinds, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, finished all white.
M.O.T. SEPTEMBER 1996

1989 LEYLAND TIGER 260 DUPLE 320 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, double glazed tinted side windows with pull-down blinds, power entrance door, TELMA retarder, chassis autolube, finished all white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1996

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38 recliners, rear toilet, CHOICE OF 2

1989 LEYLAND TIGER (Cummins 250) DUPLE 340 12M
53 recliners, brown/orange moquette, O/S rear sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, water boiler, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished cream/red/orange.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1989 LEYLAND TIGER (Cummins 250) DUPLE 320 12M
57 seats, red moquette, tinted side windows, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished cream/red/orange.
M.O.T. DECEMBER 1996

1989 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M
52 recliners, brown/orange moquette, courier seat, tinted side windows, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1997

1989 SCANIA K93 DUPLE 320 12M
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M.O.T. NOVEMBER 1996

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M.O.T. DECEMBER 1996

1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
51 recliners, beige/orange moquette, tinted side windows, curtains, drinks machine, o/s rear sunken toilet, continental door, power entrance door, finished cream/red.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet o/s rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, finished cream/grey.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1997

1987 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M
49 recliners, RETRIMMED grey/red moquette, courier seat, rear sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, drinks machine, TELMA retarder, power operated entrance door, finished white.
M.O.T. MARCH 1997

1984 DAF SB2300 JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P50 12M
49 recliners, brown/beige/orange moquette, rear floor mounted toilet, continental door, tinted side windows with curtains and blinds, drinks machine, finished white.
M.O.T. APRIL 1997

1983 (November) VOLVO B10M GLE JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599 12M
53 recliners, grey/red/orange moquette, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished white/orange/black.
M.O.T. DECEMBER 1996

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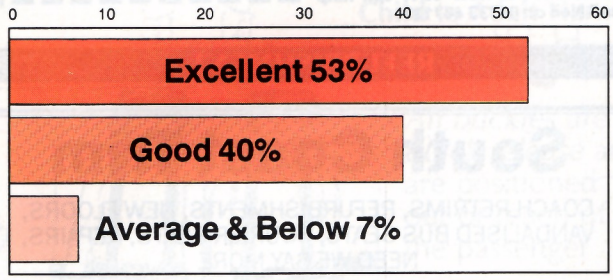

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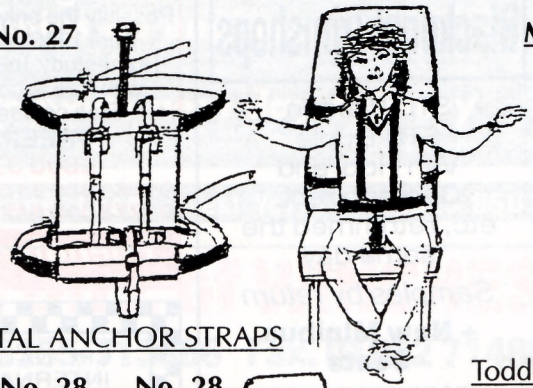

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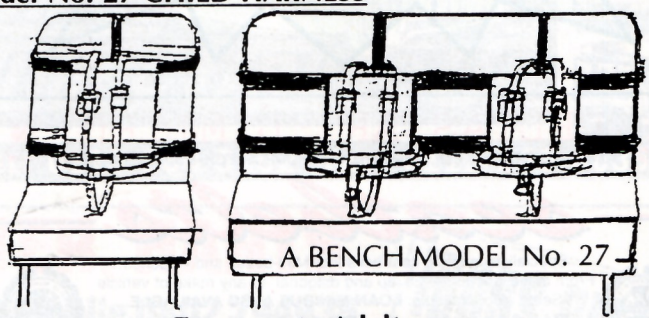

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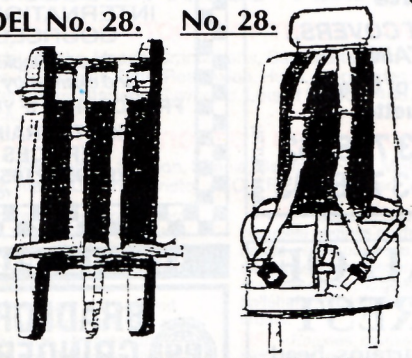

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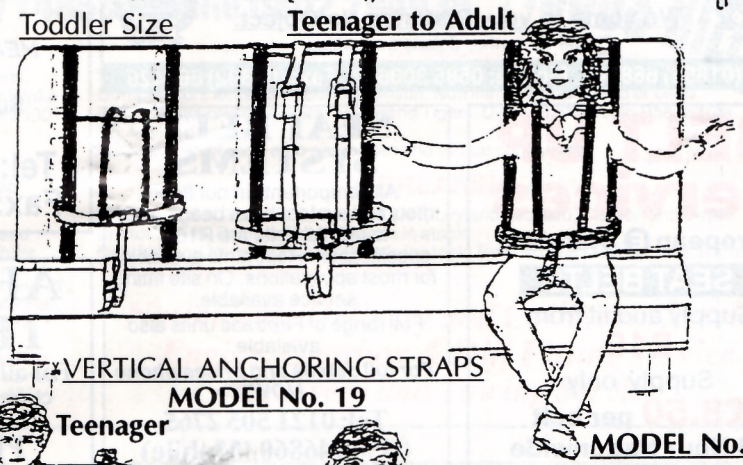

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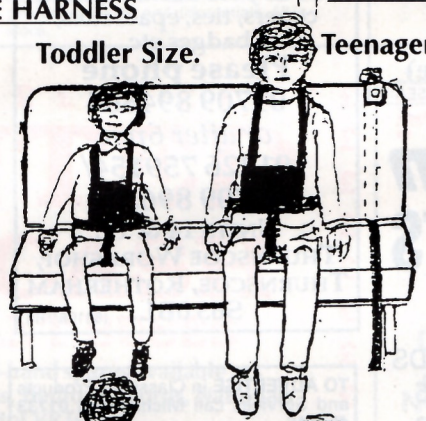

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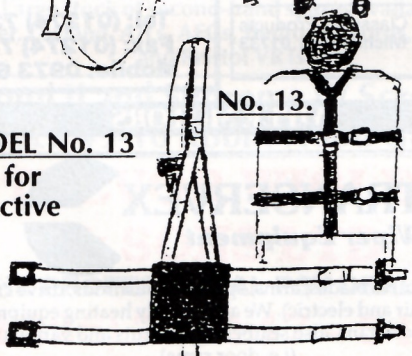

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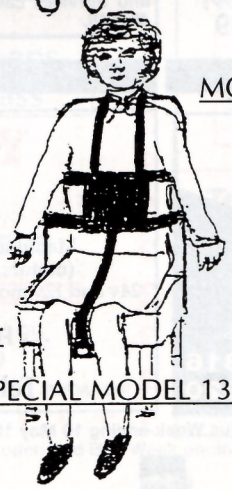

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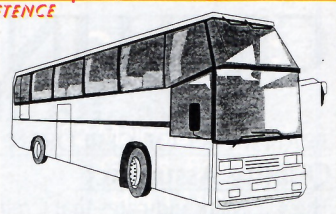
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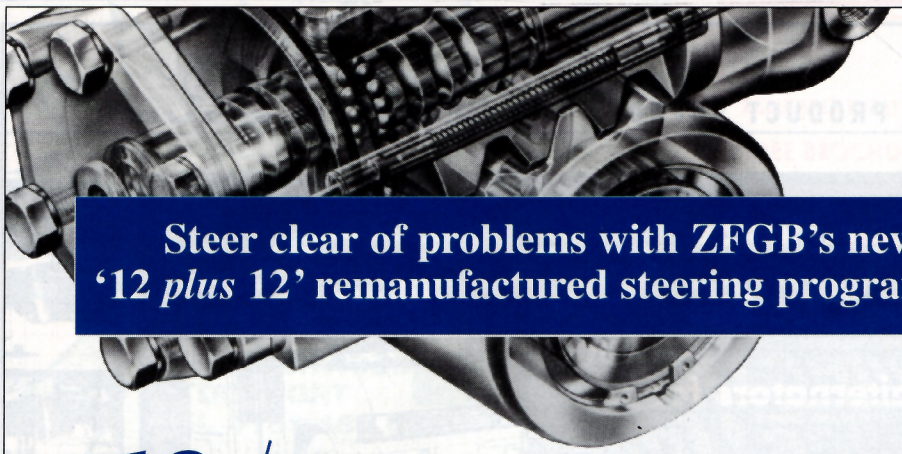

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FLEET ENGINEER

The Company

Greater Manchester is one of the most successful UK Bus Companies following an MEBO in March 1994, and has recently joined the Firstbus Group.
With six depots across the North West, 1,000 vehicles, 2,500 staff, the Company is at an exciting stage of development. In order to complete its engineering team at depot level, the Company is looking to appoint a Fleet Engineer.

The Position

As Fleet Engineer, you will be responsible to the local Business Manager for raising standards, improving productivity and reducing costs within the depot. You should be a qualified engineer with strong commercial awareness, have proven experience in a competitive environment and relish the prospect of implementing fundamental change in a high profile North West business.

Applications, including CV should be made to:

Mr J. E. Crenigan
Chief Personnel Manager
Greater Manchester Buses
Wallshaw Street
OLDHAM OL1 3TR

Closing date – 31 May 1996

A subsidiary of FirstBus plc

(63152/APP)

London Transport bus services

London Transport Buses will shortly be inviting tenders for the operation of the following London Transport bus routes.

54	West Croydon - Woolwich
75	West Croydon - Lewisham

These routes will be tendered on the basis of net cost contracts.

If you are interested and have already submitted your pre-qualification documents then you need take no further action at this stage. However if you are interested and have not completed London Transport's pre-qualification system for bus service tendering then you must do so by 22nd May 1996 in order to receive invitations to tender for the above routes.

Pre-qualification documents are available by writing to:

Mr T Wynne
Buyer
London Transport Buses
172 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 9TN
Telephone 0171 918 3812

London Transport Buses

TRURONIAN

PCV FOREMAN

Truronian, based in Truro, Cornwall and operating 40 PCV's and 20 taxis/ limousines have a vacancy for a qualified, skilled and experienced PCV fitter having proven leadership qualities, and ability to motivate staff. He would initially be a working foreman and if suitable, in two years, take responsibility for engineering matters reporting to our Operations Manager.

Applications and full CV in writing by FRIDAY 31 May 1996 to:

K C Branchett, Director,
Truronian Ltd,
24 Lemon Street,
Truro TR1 2LS

(62983/APP)

Say you saw it in CBW

▼ Coach

Clayton leaves SJ Carlton

Sales manager joins growing sales force at Alf Moseley Continental

by Mike Morgan

TONY Clayton has left his coach sales manager post at SJ Carlton after three years and joined the growing sales force at Alf Moseley Continental, the re-opened dealership at Shepshed near Loughborough. Mr Clayton rejoined Stuart Johnson at SJ Carlton within a month of the 1993 deal which transferred ownership of the Hellaby-based Neoplan dealership from National Express.

Prior to January 1992 he was sales director of Stuart Johnson Ltd, the Worksop company sold to Scania and now trading as Scania Bus & Coach. He formed a short-lived joint-venture with Andrew Fowler of WH Fowler & Sons and traded as Fenland Bus and Coach Sales from Fowler's premises near Holbeach. Subsequently he ran his own business selling second-hand coaches before moving to SJ Carlton in April 1993.

Tony Clayton: Shepshed post

▼ Bus

Centro position

PHIL Severs has been appointed finance director with Centro, the West Midlands Passenger Transport Executive based in Birmingham. Currently working as finance director at City College Manchester, Mr Severs, 41, has also served with British Rail, National Bus and a small airline in Yorkshire. He was also instrumental in setting up Ipswich Bus in the mid 1980s.

▼ Obituary

Senior partner of county's oldest op dies

LEONARD Reynolds, the second generation of Norfolk's oldest coach business, Reynolds Coaches of Caister, has died aged 85 after a year-long illness. Although Mr Reynolds handed over the reins of the company to his son Charles, he was a regular driver until taken ill and he continued to take an active role in the business until his death.

Mr Reynolds had two passions in life — his business and a collection of old cars. His first collection of around 40 vehicles was sold in 1989 but he could not resist the temptation to start it up again.

In the 1950s a long-standing fondness for Switzerland started when he became one of the first Norfolk operators to run a school coach tour to that country. The business will continue to be run by Mr Reynolds' wife Grace and son Charles. His funeral was held this week and the family has asked for donations to go to the Sandra Chapman Centre, James Paget Hospital, c/o A Jary & Son, Northgate Street, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.

CBW Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly

SUBSCRIPTION ORDER FORM

Coach and Bus Week is the news weekly for coach and bus operators. *Transit* provides vital analysis of, and information on, the UK public transport scene every fortnight. Together they make an unbeatable and invaluable package. All annual subscription rates include delivery by first class post. It is important to fill out all parts of this form. NB: *Transit* is not available on subscription without *Coach and Bus Week*.

Payment (please tick as appropriate)

Coach and Bus Week

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£49.00	£88.00	£125.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £92.00.	Airmail	1 year £124.00

Transit (Existing Coach and Bus Week Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£72.00	£129.00	£183.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £115.00.	Airmail	1 year £147.00

Coach and Bus Week and Transit (New Subscribers)

	1 year	2 years	3 years
UK	£121.00	£217.00	£308.00
Eire/Europe	1 year £164.00.	Airmail	1 year £196.00

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

YOUR COMPANY DETAILS

1. What is your primary job title? (Tick one only)

Owner/Director ❒01
Senior/General Manager ❒02
Engineering/Service Manager ❒03
Other (please specify) ❒04

2. What is your company's main business function?

Bus Operator ❒01
Coach Operator ❒05
Coach & Bus Operator ❒02
Local Government ❒03
Other (please specify) ❒04

3. How many vehicles does your company own/operate? (Tick all that apply)

	Buses	Coaches
1-5	❒01	❒10
6-10	❒02	❒11
11-15	❒03	❒12
16-25	❒04	❒13
26-39	❒05	❒14
40-100	❒06	❒15
101-400	❒07	❒16
401-1000	❒08	❒17
1000 +	❒09	❒18

4. Do you have responsibility for the recommendation/ purchase and/or specification of the following? (Tick all that apply)

	Pur	Spec	Rec
Vehicles	❒01	❒12	❒23
Parts/Spares	❒02	❒13	❒24
Oil/Fuel	❒03	❒14	❒25
Breakdown	❒04	❒15	❒26
Insurance/Finance	❒05	❒16	❒27
Fuel Cards	❒06	❒17	❒28
Training	❒07	❒18	❒29
Venue/Attraction Tickets	❒08	❒19	❒30
Ferry Crossing	❒09	❒20	❒31
Hotel Bookings	❒10	❒21	❒32
Theatre Tickets	❒11	❒22	❒33
Other (please specify)			❒34

5. What type of work does your company undertake? (Tick all that apply)

Private Hire ❒01
Day Excursions ❒02
British Tours ❒03
European Tours ❒04
Local Government Contracts ❒05
Emergency/Breakdown Services ❒06

By cheque: I enclose a cheque for £ .....made payable to EMAP Business Communications.

By credit card: I authorise you to debit my Mastercard/VISA/ DinersClub/Amex card for the amount of £ .....

Expiry date ...../.....

By invoice: Please invoice my company ❒

Card number: ❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒❒

Signed .....

Name .....

Job Title .....

Company .....

Address .....

.....

Postcode..... Tel: .....

Return to: Kerry Young, *Coach and Bus Week*, Subscription Department, EMAP Automotive Ltd., Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
or phone 01733 467051 *today*

HOW GOOD WILL YOUR BREAKDOWN ASSISTANCE BE THIS SUMMER?

"The vehicle was attended to within 35 minutes of making the first call by someone who obviously knew what he was doing and the coach was mobile again within an hour of attendance. The costs... were at a very reasonable level."
Alpha Coach Co.

"Before joining IRS we were, as always of any new organisation, a little doubtful of their promises... A phone call was returned to me within 10 minutes to say that a breakdown vehicle would meet the ferry and assist my driver. The service was excellent."
Flagfinders CTB

"It does put our mind at rest to know that we can happily refer an incident to you without having to make endless telephone calls to other operators/recovery agents via 'The Little Red Book'."
Cheney Coaches

"We provided a replacement coach under the IRS guaranteed payment system and were paid promptly at the agreed rates. We would be very happy to repeat the experience."
West Kingsdown Coaches

"Within 35 minutes of the call to IRS a fitter was on site – 13 miles outside Paris! – and the coach was mobile again within an hour. What more can I say?"
Grayline Coaches

"I am a born sceptic, but having used the IRS system twice now, on each occasion it has lived up to its promises. We are very pleased with the service."
Compass Royston

IRS can provide you with one simple Solution:

- One freephone number for all recoveries and replacement coaches.
- A specialist service that the industry has been crying out for.
- Important cost savings to the coach Operator.
- One point of contact at IRS can deal with all your assistance and recovery needs.
- Increased income from replacement vehicles and/or repair facilities (optional).

To register an interest today, call the IRS Hotline on:

01634 294400

IRS
Independent Recovery Services Ltd

Empire House, Sunderland Quay, Culpeper Close, Medway City Estate, Rochester, Kent ME2 4HN. Tel: 01634 294400 Fax: 01634 716464